Met Office 3-month Outlook

Period: October – December 2012 Issue date: 21.09.12

The forecast presented here is for October and the average of the October-November-December period for the United Kingdom as a whole.

This forecast is based on information from observations, several numerical models and expert judgement.

SUMMARY - TEMPERATURE:

Indications are that October will be slightly colder than the 1981-2010 UK mean, the signal persisting through the October-November-December period. The probability that the UK mean temperature for the October-November-December period will fall into the coldest of our five categories is 20-25%, whilst the probability that it will fall into the warmest of our five categories is 10-15% (the 1981-2010 probability for each of these categories is 20%).

CONTEXT:

We expect that the current weak El Niño conditions in the tropical Pacific will start to disappear by the end of this year, and they are not expected to influence European and UK weather significantly during the forecast period. Arctic sea ice is at its lowest recorded extent, and whilst this could play some part in determining weather over the UK over the next few months, as yet there is no clear predictive association. Sea surface temperatures in the northwest Atlantic are higher than normal and this favours a tendency towards colder, atmospheric blocking weather patterns over northwestern Europe.

The consensus from computer model simulations is for surface pressure to be higher than average to the north of the UK during the three-month period, especially in October. This is consistent with the anomalous sea surface temperature pattern. Such a pressure distribution favours weaker than average westerlies or spells of easterly winds, increasing the risk of colder than average conditions through the period.

Fig T1

3-month UK outlook for temperature in the context of the observed annual cycle

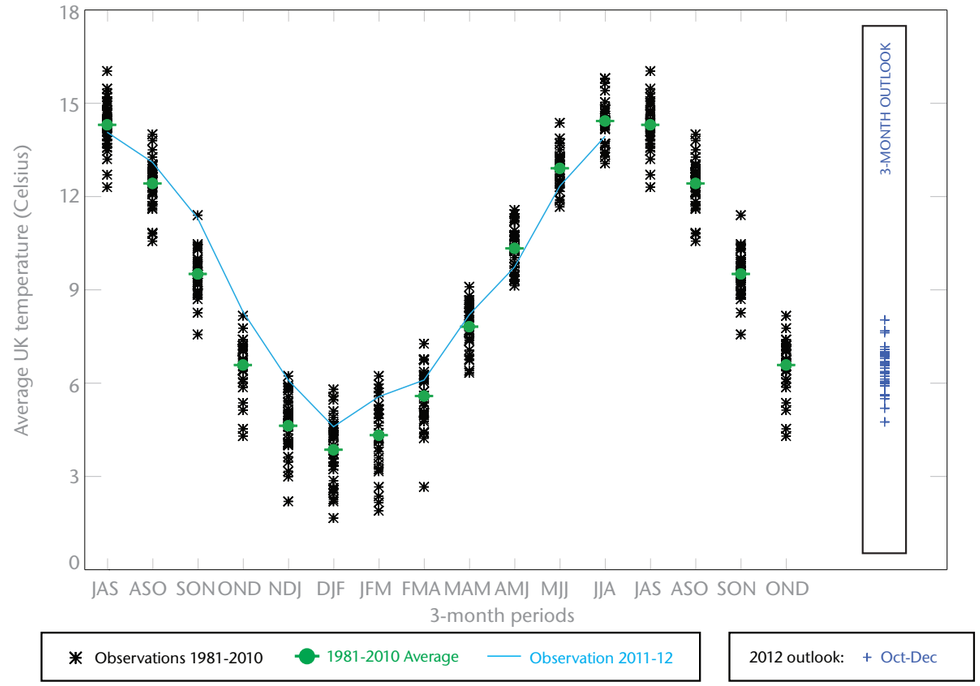


Fig T2

1-month and 3-month UK outlook for temperature in the context of observed climatology

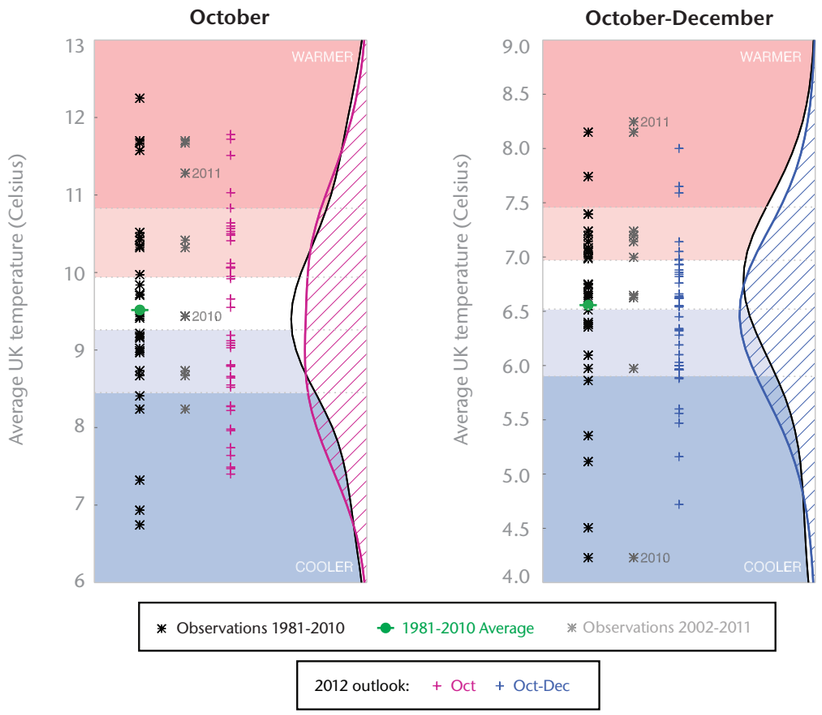
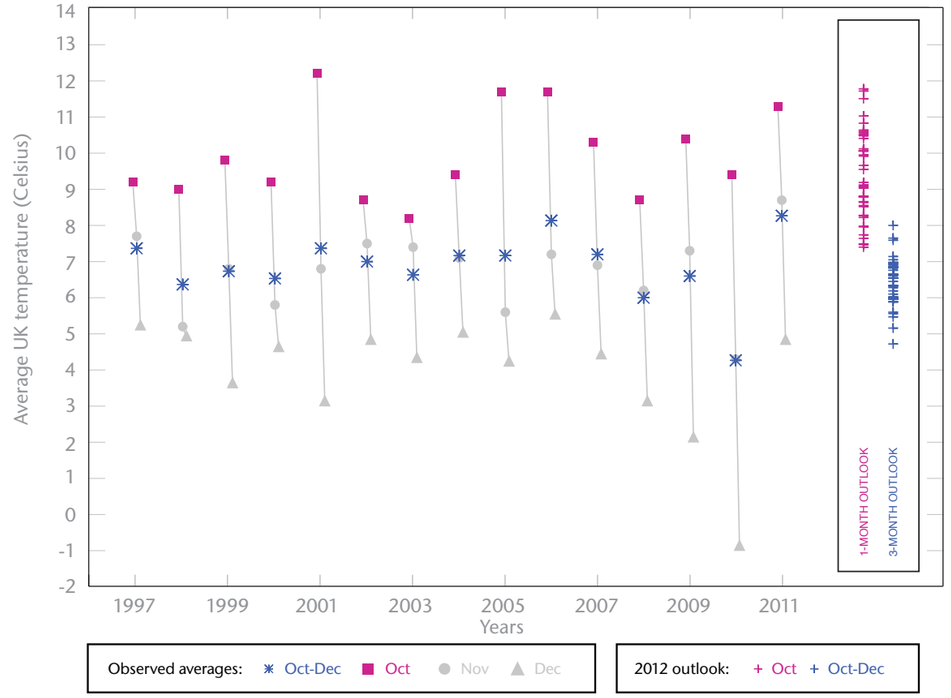


Fig T3

1-month and 3-month UK outlook for temperature in the context of recent climatology: year-to-year and within-season variability


Average UK temperature (Celsius)
1997 1999 2001 2003 2005 2007 2009 2011
Years
1-MONTH OUTLOOK
3-MONTH OUTLOOK
Observed averages: Oct-Dec Oct Nov Dec
2012 outlook: + Oct + Oct-Dec

This Outlook provides an indication of possible temperature and rainfall conditions over the next 3 months. It is part of a suite of forecasts designed for contingency planners.
The Outlook should not be used in isolation but should be used with shorter-range and more detailed (30-day, 15-day and 1-to-5-day) forecasts and warnings available to the contingency planning community from the Met Office.